

Ingleby on the Fabrications

EXTRACT FROM "THE MAN & THE BOOK" by C.M.Ingleby 1877 - 81

Part 2. p.142 onwards.

THE LITERARY CAREER OF A SHAKESPEARE FORGER

The first part I have not copied as it has no direct bearing on the Ireland Forgeries, with the exception of the following:-

"there is no proof that a single line in Shakespeare's auto-

"graph was in existence at any time during the last century." *

"* We have but W.H.Ireland's report of the assertions of Mr. &

"Mrs. Williams of Clopton House in 1793, as to the destruction of

"a large basketful of papers bearing the signature "William

"Shakespeare" - Authentic Account p.5. Confessions p.31. -

"a report which the late Mr. Wheeler of Stratford on Avon who

"had the best opportunities of knowing the truth, assured Mr.

"J.O.Halliwell was utterly & entirely without foundation of

"fact."

Wheeler was in ignorance kept in ignorance by Williams who denied it - but Jordan heard Williams say it and wrote S.I. to that effect J.H.

The following I have copied verbatim. G.H.Libbis.

"It is incumbent on me now to give some account of the disco-

"very & history of the two deeds to which Shakespeare's undoubted

"signature is attached, for it is to one of them that we are in-

"debted for the Ireland Forgeries.

"Besides the family of the Irelands, there are two persons

"unpleasantly mixed up with the fabrications : an attorney

"named Albany Wallis, & an actor named Montagu Talbot.

"The critics have never seen their way to exonerate the

"former from complicity nor the latter from active partici-

"pation, in this discreditable hoax.

"Wallis was in partnership with one Troward, whose son

"will shortly be mentioned, & this firm were solicitors to the

"Rev'd - Fetherstonhaugh, of Oxted, Surrey. In the year 1768

"Wallis is said to have discovered among his client's title-

"deeds, the Mortgage deed of the 11th. March 1612 & I suppose

"with his client's consent, Wallis presented it to Garrick.

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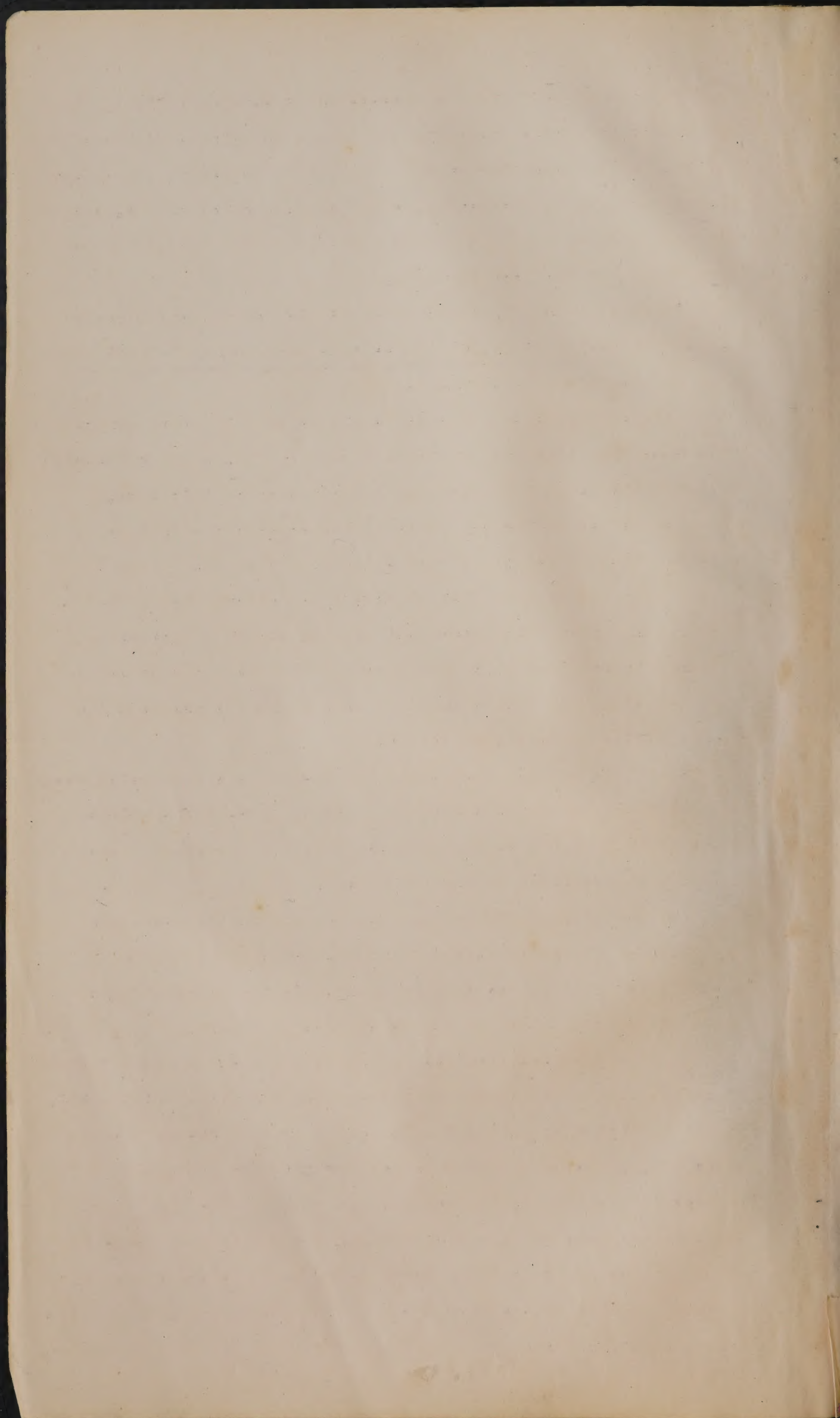
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"Wallis was in partnership with one 'Roward, whose son will shortly be mentioned, & this firm were solicitors to the Rev'd - Bishop of Oxford, Surrey. In the year 1768 Wallis is said to have discovered among his client's titles the Mortgage deed of the Irish March 1618 & I suppose with his client's consent, Wallis presented it to Garrick."



Ingleby's ac of the Fabricator

"In 1790 Malone saw it in the possession of Garrick's Widow, & he
"afterwards printed a transcript of it & a fac-simile of the sig-
"nature. In 1796 when the question of the orthography of the name
"Shakespeare, was in discussion, Malone again applied to Mrs. Garrick
"for the production of the Mortgage deed, in order to verify his
"fac-simile, but the deed was gone.

"I have no doubt whatever that Wallis had surreptitiously
"gained possession of it, for it was soon used for a distinct pur-
"pose by his friend W.H. Ireland. *all surmise & is concluded by the facts see*

"By a curious coincidence Wallis is said to have found at
"this ~~time~~ very time the counterpart of the 10th. March 1612 among
"Mr. Fetherstonhaugh's muniments. Malone inspected this also, &
"being satisfied of the genuineness of Shakespeare's signature
"appended to that deed, published a fac-simile of it.

"It will be seen that at some time between 1790 & 1796
"the Mortgage deed had passed out of Mrs. Garrick's possession,
"& I have to add that this deed together with Wallis's presenta-
"tion letter to Garrick is known to have found its way back in-
"to the Office of Wallis & Troward.

"Now it is certain that about the year 1794 a fabricated deed
"copied from the Mortgage deed in question & bearing spurious
"signatures of Wm. Shakespeare, Michael Fraser, & Elizabeth Fraser
"was in the possession of Samuel Ireland. *Copied from Johnston & Steevens, Shakespeare from the fac-simile J.H.*

"The original Mortgage deed was brought to the hammer in
"May 1841 when it was knocked down to Mr. Elkins for £162-15-0 &
"again in May 1843 it was sold by auction to the Corporation of
"London for £145. It is now in the Guildhall Library.

"The purchase deed was privately produced by young Troward
"in March 1858 to Sir Frederick Madden then the Keeper of the MSS.
"in the British Museum, & in the following June it was, on his recom-
"mendation, purchased by the Trustees for £330-15-0. Large as this
"sum was it was a better investment than that of the £130 which
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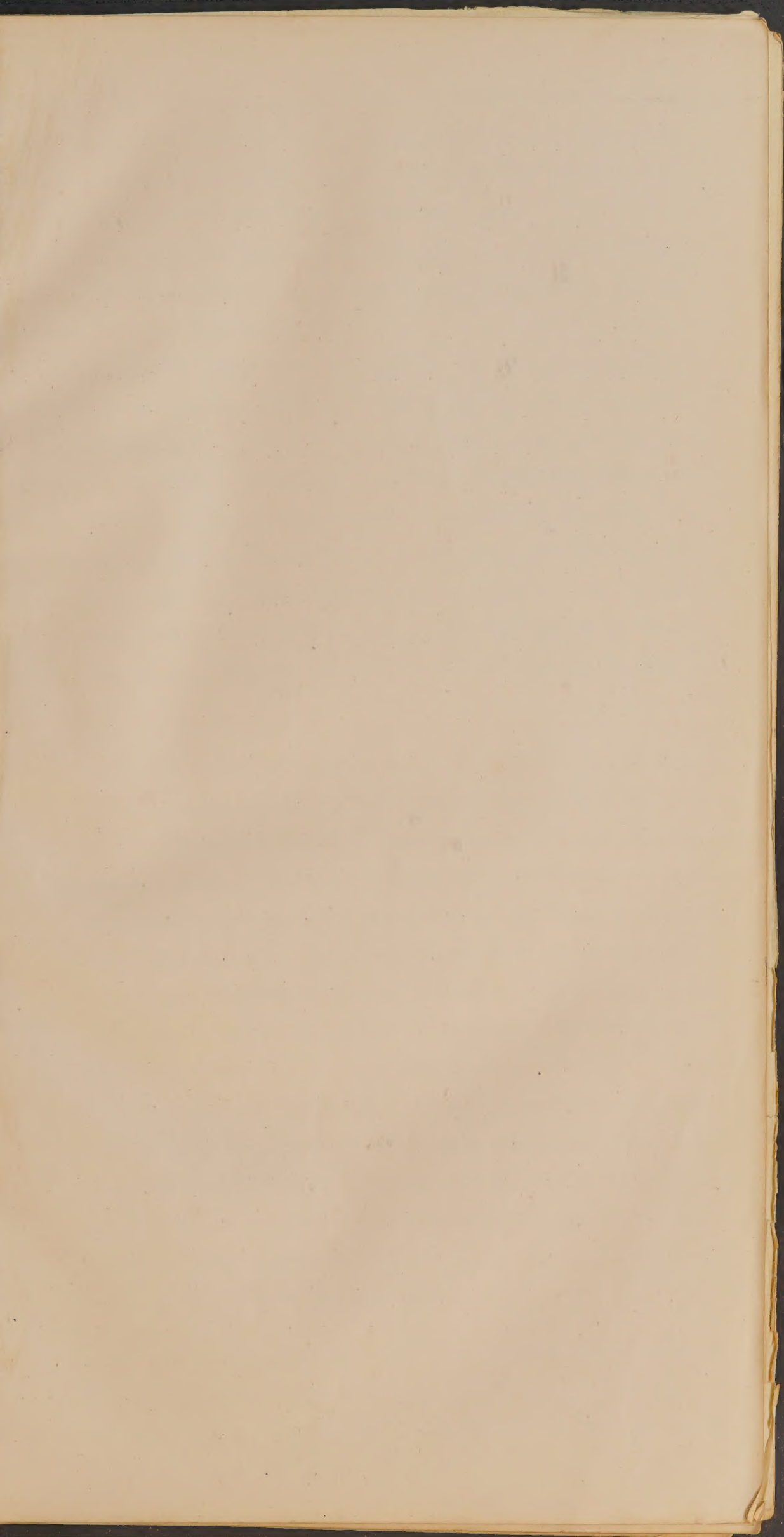
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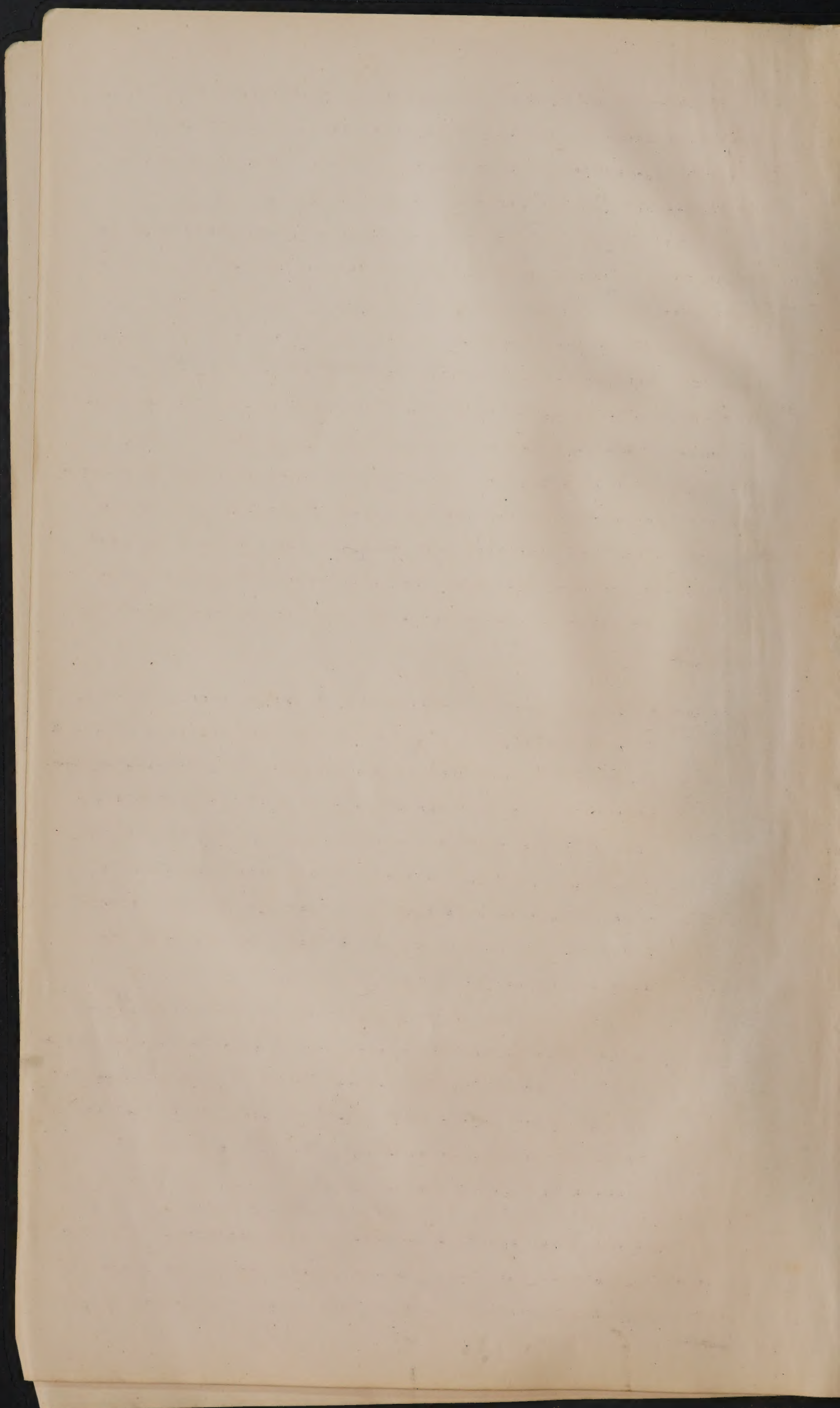
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Ingleby

If there be still another specimen of Shakespeare's writing, it will be found in certain lines, undoubtedly in a 16th. Century handwriting, appended to a MS Tragedy entitled "The History of Sir Thomas More, in the Harleian Collection 7368.

I trust it will not be long before this unique manuscript is reproduced in facsimile by one of the learned societies who give themselves to that kind of work.

But it is now time that we turn to the subject of the Ireland Forgeries premising that they constitute one of seven distinct sets of fabrications. Chief of the other half dozen are the nine (or more) fraudulent manuscripts purchased by Richard Fenton, barrister, in 1807 at a sale at Carmarthen. I have not heard in whose custody they are at present. As they are perhaps the best things of their kind that have ever been done, one regrets that the name of their perpetrator has never been discovered, though the place at which they were purchased seems to point at Montagu Talbot the actor. *

* Note:- A Tour in Quest of Genealogy in Wales, Somerset, & Wilts, by a Barrister, with a number of curious fragments from a MS. Collection ascribed to Shakespeare. 1811. We have an account of the purchase at page 29 & of the contents at page 187. The specimens are given on pp. 189, 190, 200, 202, 212, 233, 234, & 250. The spelling of these fragments is - pace Mr. Jeremiah's diction - passable if not unexceptionable. My own impression is that they are from the same source as the Ireland Forgeries.

Montagu Talbot, W. H. Ireland's confederate, once hailed from Carmarthen, where these fragments were bought. See "VINDICATION" p. 12. Besides the 24 MS. in the Schedule of unproduced papers - "Vindication" p. 32 - viz: "Brief account of his (Shakespeare's) life in his own hand" answers to No. 4 of the Fenton MS.

See Extracts copied from "The Morning Herald" on p. p.

There are other spurious matters closely associated with the name of Wm. Chetwood, the stage-manager, Chas. Macklin, the player & playwright, Geo. Steevens the editor, John Jordan the ballad monger,

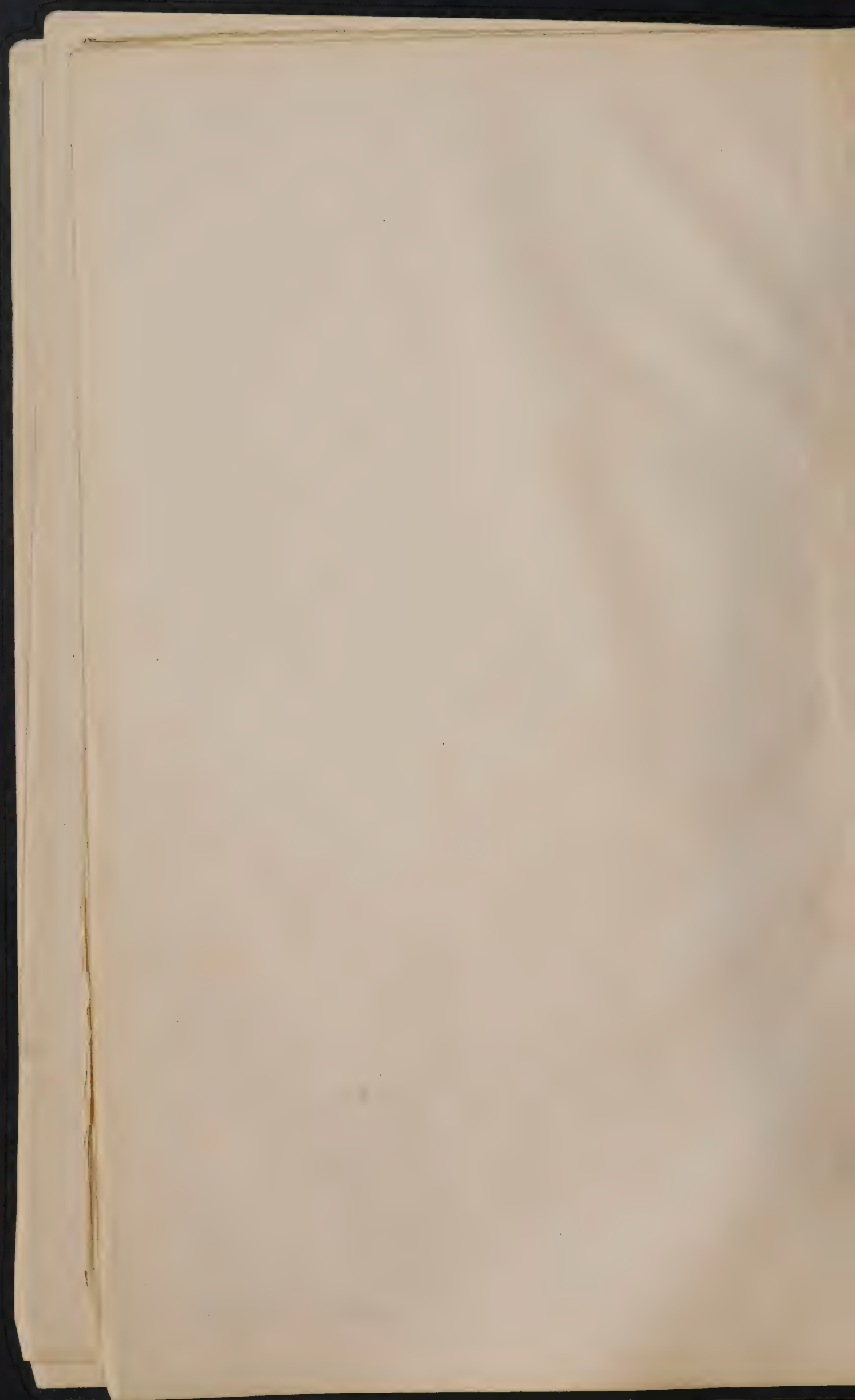
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Simply

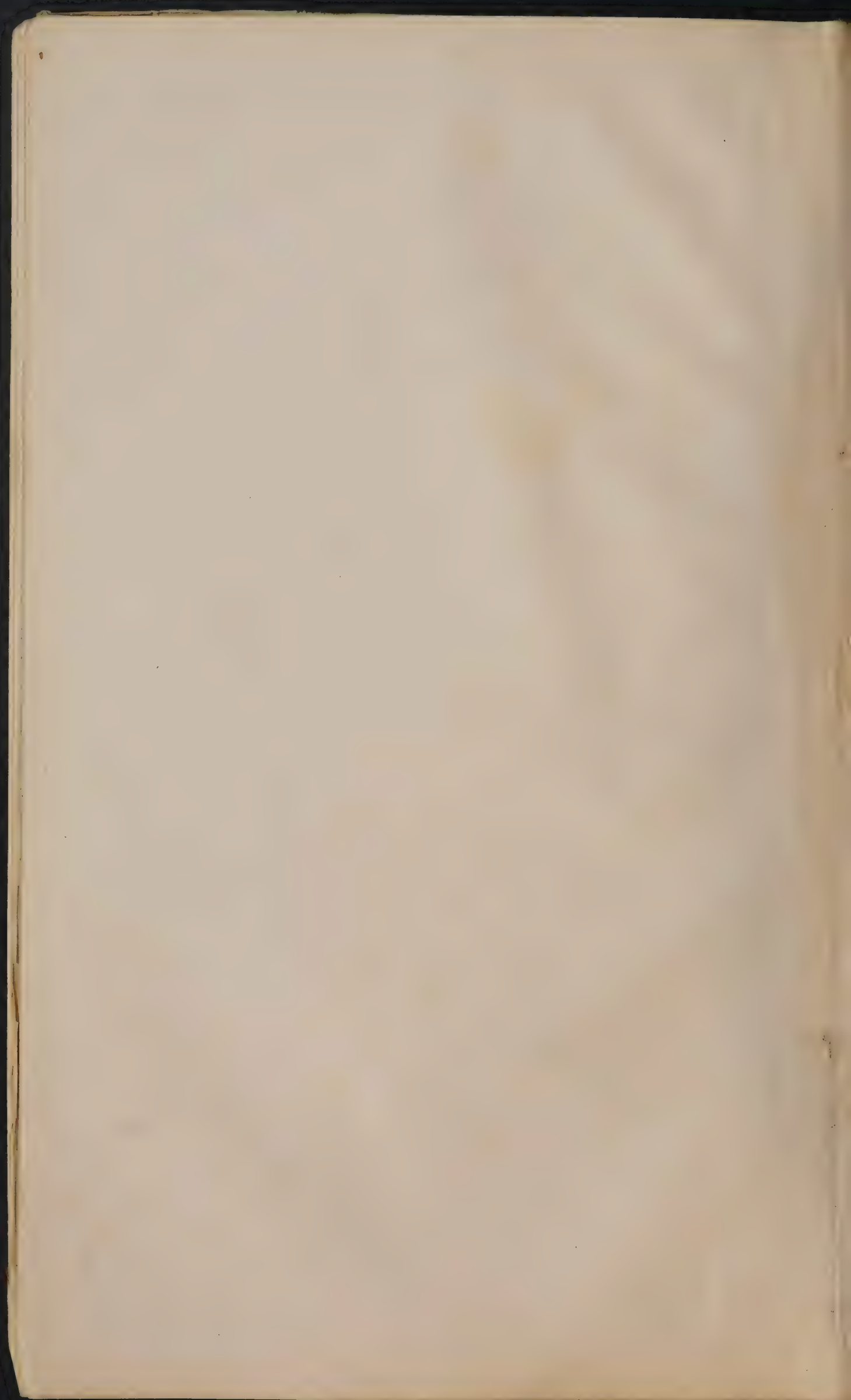
& some others. But by far the most important name in the roll of
of Shakespeare forgers, who flourished in the reign of George 3rd.
is William Henry Ireland. Despite all the Vindications, Authentic
Accounts, Confessions etc. that have been vouchsafed in the cause
of truth, there still doth hang a cloud of mystery as well as of
opprobrium over the family name. Mystery begins with the very
name of the reputed forger for though he never stooped as low
as to adopt an alias, barring the M.H. of the Forgeries, it is
still a question for settlement whether he had not another
Christian name of Samuel - & after that point has been set at
rest whether our hero was the forger of the documents with
which his name is associated, & with which he is credited in the
Bibliographer's Manual. As if it were not enough that serious
debate should be held whether Shakespeare was the author of
Shakespeare, whether some other great man of that day (say Bacon
alone or Raleigh, or Bacon & Raleigh) did not produce the Works of
Shakespeare, just as a *man* wrought during the brief span
which such overworked geniuses could steal from their pro-
fessional leisure for the cultivation of the Muses - as if that
were not enough - I say, a secondary discussion has been main-
tained whether a notorious forger, who on three occasions pub-
licly confessed himself to be such, was not rather a great ~~liar~~
liar than a great forger, in a word whether W.H. Ireland was the
author of the Ireland Forgeries.

Now it is to set at rest these questions of name &
authorship that I have written this paper, & my excuse for once
more calling attention to so well-worn a subject lies in the
single fact that evidence has recently come to light, which
enables me once for all to settle them.

Samuel Ireland, the Spitalfields Weaver like many another
weaver, left weaving for literature, & opened a shop in Norfolk
Street Strand for the sale of old books, prints & other curi-
osities, & from selling books & prints took to making them.

He had married the beautiful Anna Maria (? Irwin) &
this union was blessed with four children: Samuel, William
Henry, Anna Maria & Jane, though as to ~~how~~ the blessing was

[illegible]



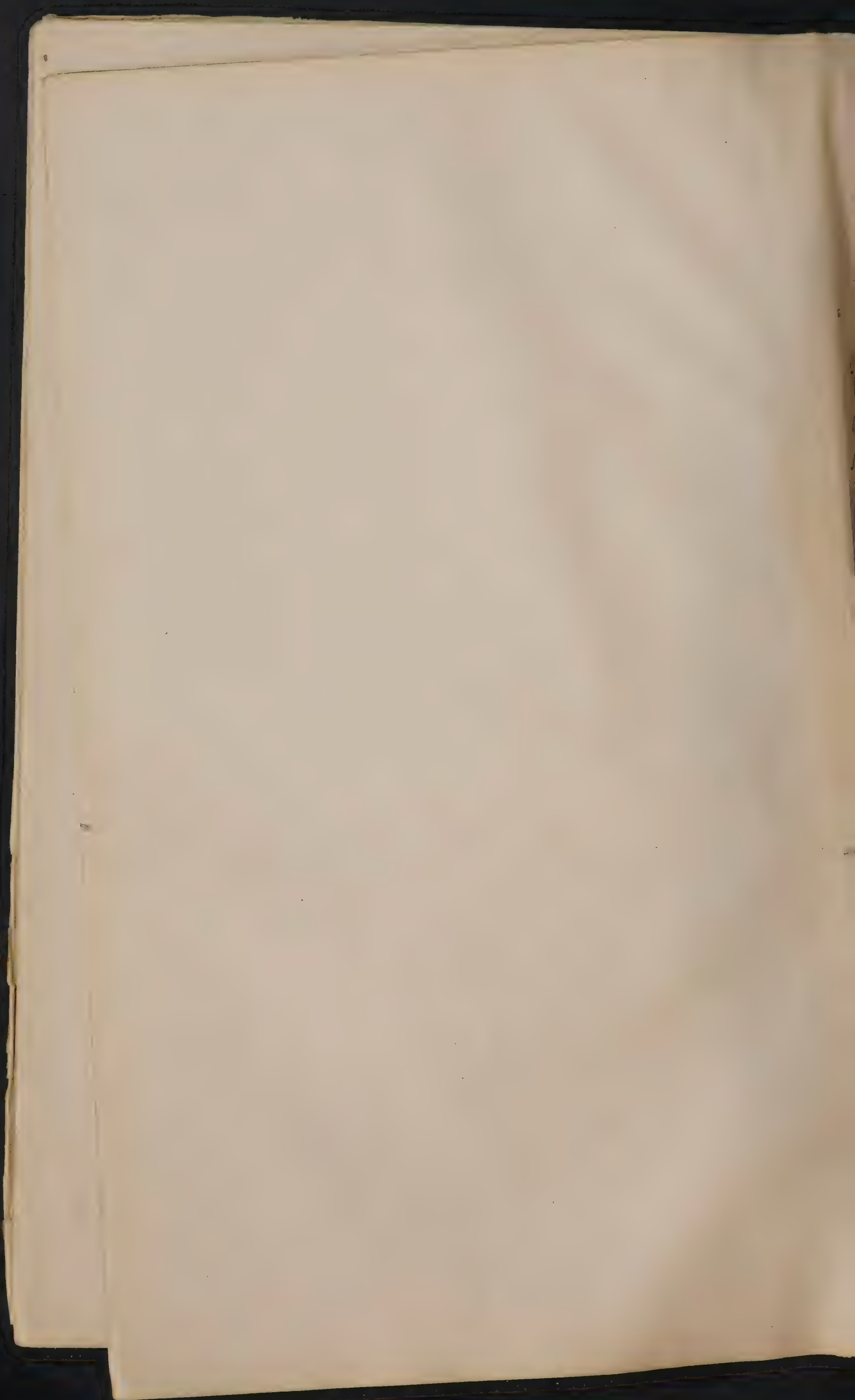
No.2 the blessing was at one time held in question, & poor Sam Senior, surviving Sam Junior, died in the full conviction that his second son had been little better than a curse.

The elder born son died early, & was thus unknown to himself or his Father "taken from the evil to come" Thenceforth the younger son was, as I have learned from his ^Xnephew, familiarly called Sam. His Father calls him Sam in the Vindication pp. 14 & 15. Talbot calls him Sam in his declaration (Vindication p.52) in his letter (Authentic Account p.27) & in his Carmarthen letter (Vindication p.12) when Talbot writes of the forger both as Samuel & Sam. In fact from the death of the real Sam, the surviving son adopted the prænomen of Samuel, & signed himself S.W.H.Ireland. Accordingly on the title page of his own copy of the "Returne from Parnassus" (4to. 1606) we find the initials in his handwriting "S.W.H.I.", to a declaration, an affidavit, an advertisement, & an undertaking, all printed by Samuel Ireland in his Vindication 1796 at pp. 12, 29, 31, & 35 we find the signature S.W.H.Ireland, & in the same book on p.28 is an affidavit signed Samuel William Henry Ireland. These papers or at least some of them are in the MS Department of the British Museum.

NOTE:- In a copy of "THE AUTHENTIC ACCOUNT" in the B.M. is a MS.note (unsigned) stating the report that W.H.Ireland was baptised at St.Clements Danes, under the name of Wm.Hy.Irwin & that his mother was a married woman separated from her husband. There is no such entry between 1772 & 1779 inclusive & in 1794 or 5 W.H.Ireland was 18. The rumour is discredited by Mr.Arno in Frasers' Magazine Aug. 1860 p.167. ³⁷

Moreover in the earliest fabricated deed, with the signature "Wm.Shakspeare" the feigned recipient of Shakspeare's bounty is "mye goode freynde Masterre William Henrye Irelande" a fact which almost suggests that the forger, if "Samuel" was not "William Henry"- for it would seem unlikely that he would insert his own exact Christian & surname in a fabrication which he designed to pass off as genuine. Possibly it was this con-

er



Forgery

sideration which led Professor Dowden to conclude that the forger was christened simply "Samuel". Nevertheless it is certain that he was christened William Henry - & nothing else.

The so-called "Shakspeare Papers" which issued from the Ireland forge & - with two exceptions - viz:- No's 15 & 16 were publicly exhibited in Norfolk Street - were:-

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Profession of Faith | 2. Southampton Letters |
| 3. Cowley Letters | 4. Anne Hathaway Letter |
| 5. Stanzas to Anne Hathaway | 6. Hemyng Note of hand |
| 7. Lease to Fraser | 8. Condell Agreement |
| 9. Lowine Agreement | 10. Two drawings of Shakspeare on one paper etc. |
| 11. Elizabeth's Letter | 13. Fragment of Hamlet |
| 12. King Lear | 14. Theatre receipts |
| 14. Deeds witnessed by Shaksp. | 17. Vertigern in 16th. century hand. |
| 16. Letters signed by Shaksp'r | |
| 18. Henry 2nd. 3 pages in 16th. | |

century hand remainder in

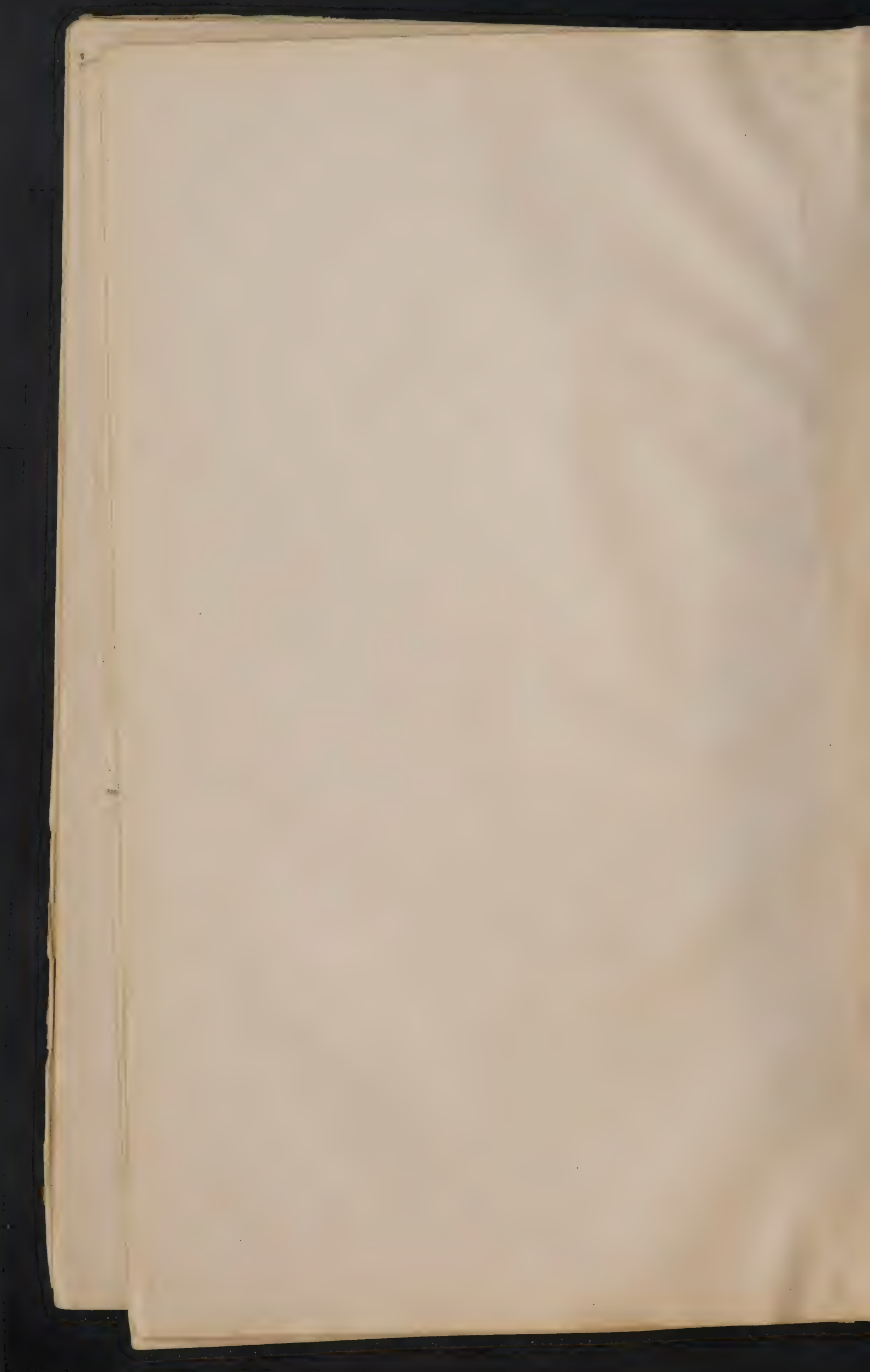
W.H. Ireland's autograph. &

X Note. We do not know who has the three deeds mentioned in the "Vindication" p. 25.

& Note:- Yet the British Museum has a MS. copy entirely in the simulated hand. *This does excite*

Palæography must have been unknown in those days, or the handwriting alone would, at the first glance, have betrayed the imposture, Nay, further, archaic spelling must have been a wholly neglected subject, or the spelling of these papers must have covered them with ridicule. Both these remarks apply with equal force to Ireland & Chatterton, for there never was a period when the writing or the spelling adopted by either had been in use.

Both of these appear to have known but little beyond the indefinite fact, that in earlier times it was the custom in many cases to write "y" for "i", to double the consonants, & to append an "e". Ireland works this rule in so mechanical a fashion that it is difficult to understand how such men as Warton, Parr, Heard, Valpy &c. refrained from laughing when they first examined the papers: e.g.



Ingoby

" Thatte thou haste perrepennedyoularelye felle"

in Lear & the inscription on the MS. Play signed Wm. Shakspeare
who is made to write that this his play

"Isse fremme Masterre Hellinneshedde" etc.

It is scarcely credible that Ireland himself should not
have known that he was here putting the skeleton key to the
fraud into the hands of the archaeologist.

Passing over the miserable rubbish which fill the letters
& verses to Anna Hathaway, in the letter to Southampton where
the playwright is made to tell the Peer that "gratitude - is a
Budde which Bllessemnes Blooms butte never dyes". (how excellent
must have been Ireland's delight in these reduplicated lls, which
no scribe ever doubled before !)

The Profession of Faith'YO. where Shakspeare is made to liken
the Almighty to a "sweete ohickenne" - of all living creatures -
& the amazing address to the forger's feigned namesake, where it
is said that " Shakspeare's soule restelesse inne the Grave shalle
uppe agayne & meete hys freynde hys Ireland - where one would na-
turally expect to hear of his meeting his God (all which makes
us wonder how any educated man in his senses could have received
these papers as genuine) we may note that some of them like some
of the Fenton papers, carry their spuriousness unmistakably on their
face. Just as in one of the latter we have Shakspeare telling of
how he had sat for his portrait to Succaro (i.e. Zuccher[#], see "Tour"
p. 201.) & another bears date before Shakspeare was born, so in the
endorsement of Queen Elizabeth's letter to Shakspeare his Theatre
is called "the Globe bye Thames" & in the lease to Fraser & wife
the houses leased are described as " abutting close to the Globe
theatre by Black Fryers London." Yet we have it on unimpeachable
evidence, that when Warton & Parr had read all the papers including
the Profession of Faith, the former thus addressed the elder Ireland
YO Note:-Suggested to W.H.I. by the Profession of Faith of John
Shakspeare which was fabricated by Jordan, but taken for
genuine by Ireland. see "Confessions" p. 56.

Note:-Cosway's portrait of Shakspeare was attributed to Zuccher[#]-
or Francis - spurious beyond doubt.



English

"Mr. Ireland, we have very fine things in our Church Service & our Litany abounds with beauties, but here is a man (who) has distanced us all." & that Boswell fell upon his knees, & in a tone of enthusiasm & exultation, thanked God that he had ^{lived to} witnessed this discovery, & exclaimed that he "could now die in peace." Whether Parr did, as the Irelands assert, agree to Warton's apostrophe, or not, it is certain that the first certificate of authenticity was actually drawn up by Parr, who had expressed dissatisfaction with that drafted by Boswell, as "too feebly expressed." (Vindication p.20).

The forgeries, by whomsoever executed, were written during the years 1794 & part of 1795, & in the early part of the latter year, all the papers with the exception of Vertigern & Henry 2nd. were on view at Samuel Ireland's house in Norfolk Street. The tragedy of Vertigern, or as it was then called Vertigern & Rowenna, was performed at Drury Lane Theatre on April 2nd. 1796.

At a preconcerted signal the play was interrupted towards the end of Vertigern's soliloquy in the 2nd. scene of the 5th. act, the words are addressed to Death & the four concluding lines are:-

"And when this solemn mockery is ended,

"With joy hath thou tak'ed him by the feet,

"And upward so, till thou dost reach the heart,

"And wrap him in the cloak of lasting night."

Of course, there is here a glance at Mrs. Quickly's account of Falstaff's death, & the last line is a close imitation of Shakespeare's language.

As usual the testimony of eye & ear witnesses is not consistent, but it is not difficult to elicit the facts from the discrepant statements. I will cite but two witnesses.

A correspondent to Notes & Queries, writes,

"At last John Kemble - - - brought the question to its climax, for in a passage which (as I best recollect) described the progress of death upon the human frame, he exclaimed "then catch him by the throat," & grasping his own throat with a rather



Irishly

"ludicrous action, & pausing, a slight laugh arose, & he himself
"appeared to be struggling with convulsive laughter, & then
"burst out a roar of genuine mirth from the pit, which was
"taken up by the whole house."

That Kemble in the line "With loy hand thou tak'st him
"by the feet" should have substituted "throat" for "feet" is
incredible, for Ireland who charges Kemble with betraying the
piece, does not charge him with altering a word in it, but with
having reiterated the line ("And when this solemn mockery is
ended") with an expression the most pointedly sarcastic & acri-
monious it is possible to conceive" & if Kemble did not substi-
tute throat for feet, it is not at all likely that he would
have seized his own throat, (unless it was to choke a laugh),
besides "An Octogenarian" writing in Notes & Queries, 2nd. Series
iii, p. 492, corroborates Ireland's account in every particular.

Four publications on the authenticity of the Papers
had preceded the representation of Vertigern. Malone's "Inquiry"
demolished the whole imposture, & was published the day after
the fiasco, & was the signal for further publications, attacking,
defending, or vindicating the forgeries. Five volumes viz:- those
of Woodward (by some, the "Familiar Verses" were attributed to
one Orton) while Sir Bate & Lady Dudley, & Hargreave, as well as
the renowned "Precious Relics" are humorous or abusive, mostly
in the nature of parodies, while those of Beaden, Col. Webb, Waldron,
Wyatt, Malone, Caulfield, Chalmers, Cobbett, Oulton, Hardinge &
Mathias, & two anonymous works, are serious discussions of the
authenticity - a question which would seem unworthy of such
treatment, & a proper subject for ridicule.

The historical question was reopened by myself in
1859, & provoked two admirable replies, the one by the late Mr.
T. J. Arnold F.S.A. & Police Magistrate, which was published in
Fraser's Magazine for Aug. 1860, the other in The London Review
for Oct. 1860, not improbably from the pen of the Editor, Dr. Chas.
Mackay. These two together furnish an excellent & accurate
history of the Ireland Forgeries, leaving nothing more to be
said, but what relates to sources of information not access-



Langton

ible to the public at the time these accounts were written.

The earlier critiques range over the period 1796-1800 both inclusive. The few writers who had believed in & defended the papers had given in by 1797, & fortune having "spurned down her late beloved" - whether we refer to the elder Sam or the younger man so nicknamed - not one votary remained who was willing to "accompany his declining feet." Both father & son were covered with abuse, & neither was ever forgiven by his contemporaries for a practice which whether innocent or not, had done the excellent work of unmasking the imposters of criticism. I have said "not one" but there was one if not two, *Gore Langton*^{*}, who had refused to inspect the papers (as Steevens & Malone had done) evinced the kindest disposition towards the elder Ireland, & Wm. Cobbett took occasion to pat the younger Ireland on the back & denounce the fresh-growing idolatry of "the immortal bard" whom he considered as a fit subject for blame as well as praise, & utterly unfit to stand as England's typical poet.

I will say no more of these 18th. century writers. For fifty years the subject slumbered, but it cropped up again in the publication of Mr. J. P. Collier's "Notes & Emendations," which heralded the advent of an entirely new "Shakspeare Controversy" & the detection of a series of fabrications far more skilful & injurious than those which had astonished the contemporaries of Johnson. My unfortunate note on the Ireland Forgeries, published in 1859, was called forth by an anonymous one printed in Willis's Current Notes for Dec. 1855, & subsequently owned by a literary gentleman who was once an assistant to Wm. Hone, & who had married his daughter. We may accordingly date the rise of the second series of publications on the Ireland Forgeries, in that month. By that time W. H. Ireland had been dead about 20 years. He was in fact, born in or about the year 1776⁰ & died in 1835 in his 60th year. Up to 1853 it was generally accepted, ~~he~~ that W. H. Ireland was the sole & unassisted forger (unless his friend Talbot had given him some small help) & Samuel Ireland the dupe of his son. It seemed however that there was one dis-

This note is on Page 12.



Ingleby

sentient who had held his peace for twenty years after his witness had died & who then gave the world at secondhand, that witnesses testimony. Mr. Burn, the editor of the serial in question, wrote as follows :- Nemo being the signature of a previous correspondent in the columns of "Willis's Current Notes".

"Nemo is in error in supposing him to have been 'the Author of the Shakspeare Forgeries.' His father Samuel Ireland was the original deviser of the whole affair. He had succeeded so well in befooling 'professed judges' of the original designs by Hogarth; that prompted by his needy circumstances he let fly at a higher game, & befouled the shrine of England's dramatic bard ! It was Samuel Ireland's eldest daughter who wrote the imitations of the dramatist: the younger one assisted, & the redoubtable William Henry was merely a copier.

It was Samuel Ireland who began by collecting books of Shakspeare's time, fabricated manuscript notes & inserted them in the books as if written by the immortal bard, when finding them greatly admired, he persisted till their frequency might have divulged the nefariousness of the transaction, to all but those who were stupidly blind. In one of his freaks, Samuel Ireland desirous of accommodating the world with a portrait of the irritable Shakesperian Critic John Dennis, & not aware there was really one extant, engraved by Vandergucht - ventured on one copied from an original drawing by Hogarth, in the 2nd. volume of his Graphic Illustrations of that celebrated painter.

It is almost nugatory to observe Hogarth never troubled himself about John Dennis of theatrical thunder notoriety, & the portrait there presented, is a fiction by Samuel Ireland, though received as genuine by many respected Hogarthian Collectors.

Should Nemo's desire be still unsatisfied, the writer to whom William Henry Ireland was long personally known, may possibly communicate some particulars, hitherto but very imperfectly known. Let this be generally understood, the "Confessions" published by him, were a tissue of lies from beginning to end, & the original idea of the volume, was caused

Subsequent to the 18th May 1827 (117) The 2nd day
of the 11th 3rd month 1827. The next number in
the 11th 3rd (117) as I presume by the 11th month
of the 11th 3rd month from Burn as in 1824, and
the 11th 3rd

Irish

by an irresistible impulse at the moment, that of raising the wind, as he himself assured the writer -

When needs must, the devil drives! " ⊕

I know not whether Nemo ever asked for more: I know I did both by letter to Willis's Current Notes, & by private letter to the editor, but Mr. Burn would not break silence.

I then sent a statement of the facts to Notes & Queries but Mr. Thoms would not insert it. Finally I sent a note on the subject to Mr. Hotten, for his ADVERSARIA, which appeared in the No. for May 2nd. 1857. On the 2nd. also appeared in Notes & Queries (2nd. Series iii. 344) an article from the pen of Mr. Wm. Bates of Birmingham, whose opinion I shall presently cite.

My note in Hotten's ADVERSARIA treated Mr. Burns communication as a hoax. That was more than he could stand, & he indignantly came up to the scratch, but the facts he was thus made to impart had little or no reference to the question of W. H. Ireland's authorship of the Shakspeare Forgeries, they concerned his private life, & as I have no wish "to draw his frailties from their dread abode" I shall not repeat Mr. Burn's statements. I will only say that he insisted upon it that W. H. Ireland was one of the greatest liars that ever lived, & he seemed to think that the establishment of this proposition removed all doubts as to the truth of Ireland's private confession to himself. The logic is not so bad as it looks, for a man may lie for a purpose to the public, yet speak truth to his friend.

It is always difficult to determine what degree of credence should be given to the assertion of an untrustworthy man, & the difficulty is not diminished in a case where the witness has committed himself to two contradictory statements.

⊕ Note to page 10. In his "Confessions" p. 312, he says he was "scarcely 17½ years old" when he wrote the forgeries. If this means in 1794 he would have been born in 1776 or 1777.

⊕ Note - An error for "Needs must, when the Devil drives."

English

In the case of the Simonides forgeries, which received full discussion at a meeting of this Society, a similar difficulty ultimately arose, for after the detection of the forgery of the Uranus MS. the arch forger while maintaining the genuineness of that palimpsest, publicly declared that he had fabricated the Codex Sinaiticus.

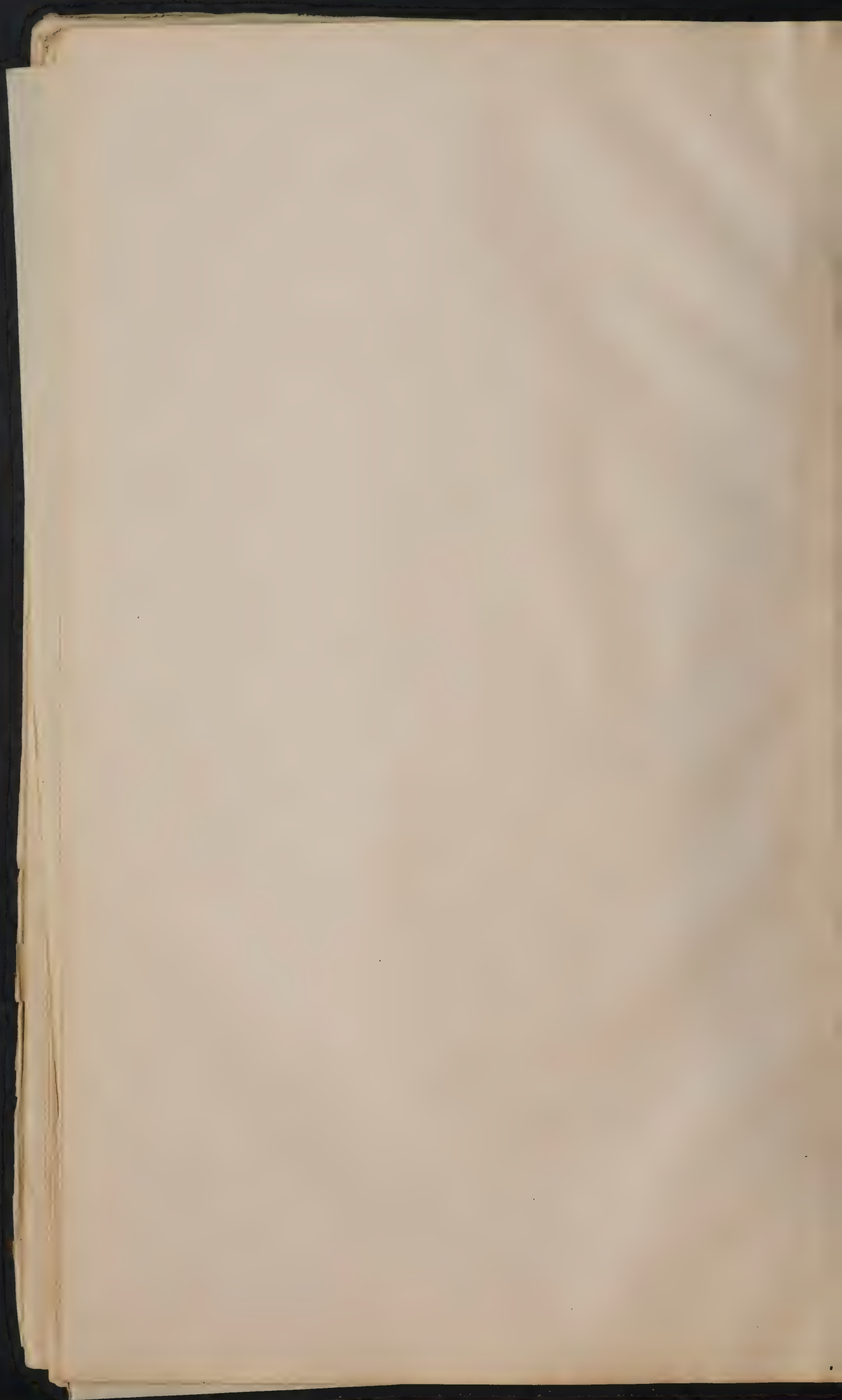
But in the case of the Ireland MSS. there is just a doubt whether Mr. Burn has not misrepresented or coloured Ireland's private confession. My own conviction is that very little weight can be attached to the accuracy of Mr. Burn's report. In 1859 I thought differently, & committed myself to a note on the Ireland Forgeries, appended to my first Shakespeare book, which I now deeply regret.

Mr. Bates relied upon three points -

1. Ireland's advertisement in the London papers asserting the innocence of his father (Vindication. p. 30.)
2. His solemn declaration that he was the writer & author of the forgeries (Authentic Account p. 42.)
3. His reiteration of both assertions three years before his death (Vortigern 2nd. edition p. VII.)

But if, as Mr. Burn says, Ireland was the greatest liar that ever lived, these allegations go for nothing, but not knowing with what object Ireland was induced to make a private confession to Mr. Burn, & being far from sure, in those needy days, he did not make it with a view to literary employment, I should not be disposed to attach more weight to his confidential than to his public avowal. But whatever we are to think of Mr. Burn's communication, I am happily in a position to clear the name of Samuel Ireland from the foul aspersions which have been cast upon it.

In the first place it is well to remember what was the elder Ireland's dying declaration. I am not disposed as a matter of course, to accept unchallenged the last dying speech & confession of any man, but I give Mr. Ireland's for



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what it may be worth.

Dr. Latham who attended him in his last illness, in 1800 records it at p. 176 of his once valued work on Diabetes published in 1810:— he writes "notwithstanding the world did not give Mr. Ireland credit for his assertion respecting his concurrence (with) or even connivance at his son's literary fraud, yet in justice to his memory I think myself here called upon, since I have this opportunity, to record it as his death-bed declaration) that he was totally ignorant of the deceit, & was equally a believer in the authenticity of the manuscripts as those which were even the most credulous."

Mr. Arnold in the article already mentioned, like Mr. Bates, lays stress upon W.H. Ireland's three statements, & believes in the honesty of his confession & his exoneration of his father, adding, that even if the "Confessions" are not trustworthy throughout, there is no ground for implicating his father or any other member of his family, nevertheless this writer continues thus:—

"What cannot fail to induce some feeling of doubt in the truth of W.H. Ireland's narrative, is the fact that a comparatively uneducated youth should, without co-operation, have produced not only such a mass of manuscripts in so short a time, but that he should have been able to fabricate a drama of nearly 3000 lines which by any sane person could be received as the poetry of Shakespeare."

But he adds — "there is no evidence to counterbalance William Henry's positive & repeated assurance that he received no assistance from any quarter. If there were anyone towards whom suspicion might be directed, it would be to Mr. Montagu Talbot the intimate friend & confidant of Young Ireland, & to some extent his aider & abettor in the fraud. Talbot, to adopt W.H. Ireland's phrase, was "a friend of the Muses," he undoubtedly offered to assist in the fabrication of *Vortigern*." (See "Confessions" pp. 126 — 131.)

Mr. Arnold's conclusion is, that in any event the elder Ireland must be acquitted of all share in the forgeries, either

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as author or abettor, in fact that he was simply the dupe of his own son. Moreover Mr. Burn's assertion is dis-credited by the counter assertion of another friend of W.H. Ireland, who informed Mr. Arnold that Wm. Hy! was very communicative as to his Shaksperian fabrications: he never said in plain terms that his father was privy to his imposture, but somewhat suspiciously hinted doubts as to his total ignorance ~~as to his total ignorance~~ of what was so mysteriously going on."

On the other hand the writer in the London Review seems willing to admit that the elder Ireland is not free, from the suspicion at least, of connivance. He writes :-

"It is not easy to believe that Samuel Ireland was wholly innocent of complicity in the fraud of which he was the willing agent. But there is no inculpatory evidence, & there are some circumstances which tend to exonerate him altogether. Perhaps the strongest ground of suspicion against him is, that he did not betray any suspicion himself! - - - "Three years after the publication of his Son's "Confessions" (Query "Authentic Account G.H.L.") he declared in his preface to "Vertigern" that not even that disclosure, nor all the arguments of the critics, founded upon internal evidence, could induce him to believe that great part of the papers were fabricated by any individual, or set of men of that day."

I do not see that the latter assertion favours the suspicion against him, on the contrary it appears to me, that, if he himself were the author or concealer of the forgeries, he would not have shown the least anxiety to relieve his contemporaries from the odium of the fraud. But if he were conscious of his own innocence he might well feel that an excuse might be found, not only for his own credulity, but for that of such men as Parr & Warton, by attributing to some of the papers a value & an antiquity which they did not possess.

In fact in view of all the circumstances, the writer in the "London Review" acquits Mr. Ireland sen'r of any guilty participation in the transaction. On many occasions we have heard

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W.H. Ireland vindicate his father from all complicity in the forgeries, direct or indirect, with an earnestness & warmth that, at all events looked like truth, & we knew that Mr. Talbot believed Mr. Samuel Ireland to have been the dupe of his own son." & this was the opinion of Dr. Drake, recorded in his "Shakspeare & his Times."

I said that the excuse for this paper was the fact that evidence had recently come to light settling, or at least materially tending to settle the question of authorship. Last summer the Trustees of the British Museum, through the agency of Mr. Robson of Cranbourn Street, purchased of Samuel Ireland's nephew *X* the whole of his Literary Remains. My own examination of these voluminous papers has removed from my mind all doubt as to the complete exculpation of the old man.

The Remains consist of three thick 4to volumes besides a mass of miscellanea. These volumes are :-

1. A Scrap Book of Newspaper cuttings, bills, caricatures etc. relating to the forgeries, with MS. notes by the collector.
2. His correspondence with Sheridan, Lialoy, Wallis, Kemble, Talbot etc.
3. Samuel Ireland's carefully kept diary, with letters from his son & the feigned Mr. H.

There are also the agreement between father & son as to the delivery of the papers, the declaration of faith in the authenticity of the papers, with the autograph signatures of the dupes, four deeds with forged signatures, & several forgeries not included in the Miscellaneous Papers".

Poor old Sam never emerged from the cloud of obloquy which covered him as soon as the Shakspeare Bubble had burst.

His favourite & last-surviving son forsook him, to seek his bread in a precarious way by literary hack-work. The old man never looked up again. He probably thought with Othello, though he did not actually speak it,

"It is too true an evil

"And what's to come of my displaced time

"Is naught but bitterness."

*X Not Samuel's nephew (16) but Wm. Hys nephew
Rev. Mansfield Thomas*

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He survived his humiliation & disgrace but four years.

Among the Remains lately acquired by the British Museum are two portraits of Samuel Ireland, the one being a caricature, printed as was the custom of the day, in a pink or pale red ink.

Of W.H. Ireland there is but one engraved portrait, a copy is in the British Museum, & I inserted another in the Moncrieff-Mackay 4to. volume of Specimens of W.H. Ireland's Forgeries, which I presented last spring to the Birmingham Shakspeare Memorial Library. (Note :- This was destroyed in the disastrous fire of January 11th. 1879.) The only miniature of him was painted on ivory by Samuel Drummond A.R.A. & this represents a man past middle life, having the appearance of a handsome beau, not a little made up. This was hung by myself last May, in the Library of Shakspeare's Birthplace, & it is the property of the Trustees.

W.H. Ireland married one of the Culpeppers of Kent Castle (a family famous in the Civil Wars.), the widow of Captain Paget R.N. ^{brother} nephew to the Marquis of Anglesea. It is said that the marriage was not a happy one. He appears at all times to have been able to earn a competency. Once he was brought under the notice of Royalty & was engaged to write a sort of masque for the Princess Elizabeth. Besides writing two pieces for the occasion of the Frogmore Fete, he was engaged for four days in the preparations for it, & his exertions were rewarded by the offer of a £5 note. I am glad to say he had the manliness to refuse it.

He died May 2nd. 1835. His literary career is represented by over twenty publications, printed books & pamphlets - not a few of which are now lying upon the table.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

W.H. Ireland's literary career, as evidenced by his printed writings & MSS. remains, was scarcely worthy of his remarkable talents. The Shakspeare epoch, during which the "Authentic Account" "Vertigern", Henry 2nd. & the "Shakspearian Hunt" (a series of papers contributed to the "Oracle" a periodical edited by James Beaden) were produced & published close at the end of the last century. Then followed a period during which he wrote fiction &

Ingleby

poetry, the former being represented by three novels & the latter by a drama, & a volume of Rhapsodies, & he now rewrote his account of the Shakespeare forgeries & published it with a mass of gossip in a volume entitled "Confessions etc." This book which is I fear more amusing than trustworthy, was reprinted in fac-simile by Mr. J. Pearson in 1872 (circa) a fact which proves that the first edition had become very scarce, & that there was still a demand for it.

In 1807 Ireland made a fresh start, & printed his first satirical piece "The Modern Ship of Fools", an imitative poem so called "Neglected Genius" in 1812, his cleverest book, if indeed it were his; "Chalceogriphimania" in 1814, & "Scribboliomania" in 1815.

In the "Chalceogriphimania" he is said to have had material aid from Caulfield the printseller & T. Ceram, but Ireland's cleverness once more displays itself in the frontispiece, which is a pretended portrait of the famous jester "Wil Somers".

In 1822 he came out in a new character viz:- as historian of France. First appeared his account of the Bourbons called "France for seven years", & soon after his English version of Voltaire's infamous "La Pucelle". In 1823 he translated Philarette Charles coup d'essai, entitled "Memoires d'une jeune Grecque". In 1824 appeared his "Memoirs of Jeanne d'Arc", & he now contributed to the continuation of Granger's "Biographical History of England". In 1826 he published a "Life of Napoleon" & "The Last Will & Testament of Napoleon Bonaparte".

There is also a "New History of the County of Kent" by W.H. Ireland in 4 vols. 1828, I do not know whether the author was the Shakespeare Forger.

The concluding epoch of Ireland's life began in 1830 with a fresh series of political squibs. "The Political Devil", "Reform; Britannia's Cat o' Nine Tails" & "Constitutional Farces".

Copies of these exceedingly scarce tracts, together with seven of those already mentioned, were sold for me by Messrs. Sethaby, Wilkinson & Hodge (I should say given away) on April 7th. 1879.



Irish

Of Ireland's MSS. remains, I know of only the following six.

The Original Fabrications - In the British Museum Bohn's Lowndes
2322.

A Full & Explanatory Account of the Shakspearian Forgeries by
myself, the writer Wm. Hy. Ireland Folio - Bohn's Lowndes 2323

The Life of the Old, Old, very Old Man Thomas Parr by W. H. Ireland
illustrated by drawings, engraved portraits etc. - Formerly in the
Marquis of Donegal's Collection. Large Folio.

Stanzas to Miss Clara Fisher by W. H. Ireland illustrated by engraved
portraits 4to.

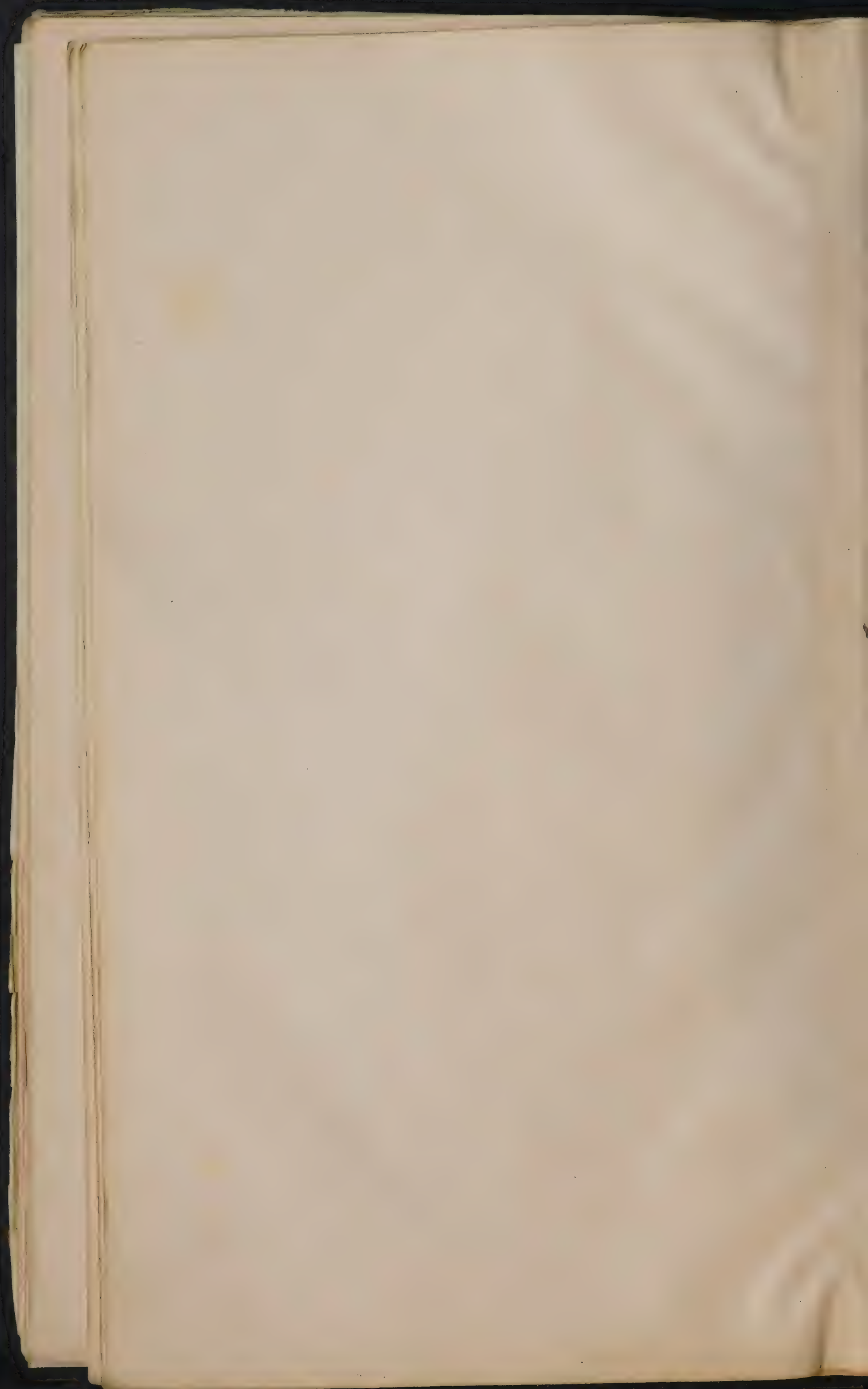
Mnedy on Shakspeare. 4to.

Frogmore Fete as written by me, W. H. Ireland in 1802 at the Request
of the Princess Elizabeth. Illustrated with portrait of the Princess
Elizabeth. 28 pp. 4to. The last three bound in 1 volume were sold
for me by Messrs Sotheby Wilkinson & Hodge for the contemptible
sum of eight shillings.

Signatures of Departed English & Foreign Potentates & Eminent
Characters, or Death's Dance among the Reliques of the Departed.
Illuminated from Holbein. This which contains 144 imitated signatures
is still in my library, having been bought in for £1-11-0.

I may be allowed to note in conclusion, that my library
also possesses a special copy of the "Authentic Account" 1790
which has twentyeight insertions as follows:-

1. Three fabricated signatures of Shakspeare
2. Fabricated signature of Shakspeare to Deed to Fraser.
3. " " " Michael Fraser
4. Sketch of the Quintin Seal affixed to same.
5. Genuine impression of the Jug watermark.
6. Sketch of the Jug watermark.
7. Shakspeare's Profession of Faith..
8. Fac-simile of Lord Southampton's signature.
9. Fabricated signature of Lord Southampton.
10. " Letter Shakspeare to Rich'd Cowley.
11. " Promissary Note Shakspeare to Heminge.
12. " signature of Heminge.
13. Fac-simile of Heminge's signature.



Singley

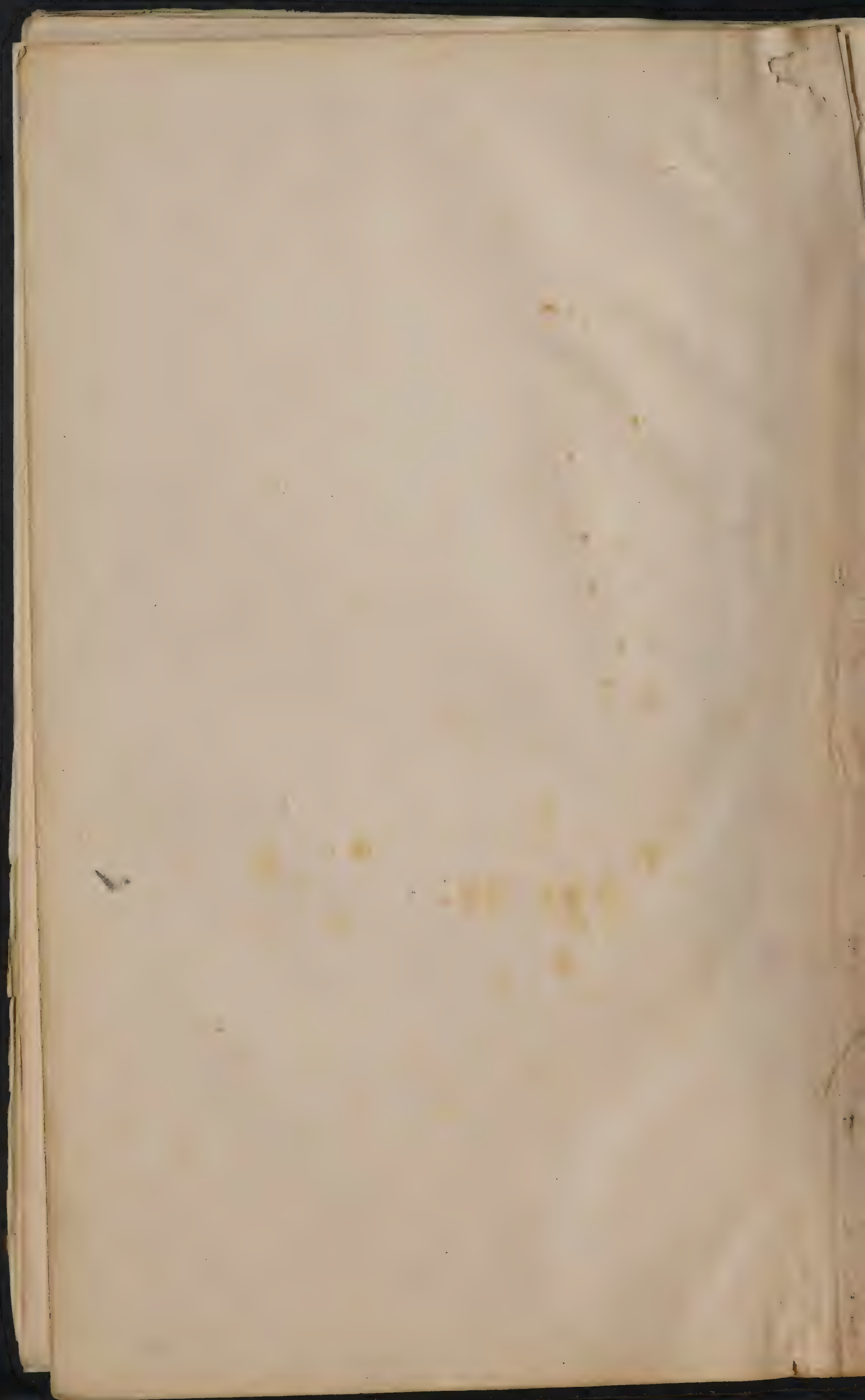
14. Love Letter Shakspeare to Anna Hathaway.
15. Fabricated signature of Queen Elizabeth.
16. Fac-simile " " " "
17. Shakspeare's fabricated note to Queen Elizabeth.
18. Fabricated MS. passage in King Lear.
19. " signature of Lovine.
20. " " Shakspeare to the Lovine Deed.
21. " receipt signed W. Shakspeare for playing before Lord Leicester.
22. Fac-simile of Lord Leicester's signature.
23. Fabricated MS. of passage in Vertigern.
24. " signature of Shakspeare to the Condelle Deed.
25. " " Condell.
26. Armorial bearings of the Ireland family.
27. Verses in handwriting of Anna Maria Ireland.
28. Original portrait of Anna Maria Ireland as a girl.

It was not to the credit of the trade that the members who attended the sale allowed this copy to be bought in for £2-5-0, a sum which very inadequately represents its value.

Another copy "corrected throughout by the Author for a new edition" was sold for me by Messrs Sotheby's April 7th. 1879 & fetched £1-7-0. It had W.H. Ireland's autograph letter to the publisher, Debrett, prefixed, & on the title the autograph signature of Debrett & J.P. Kemble. On the back of the title Kemble writes, that Allen's copy sold for £1.

The fragments of a play entitled "The Virgin Queen" printed by Waldron in 1796, must not be confounded with any of the Shakspeare Papers fabricated by Ireland.

In the "Deed of Trust to John Heminge" mention is made of an "Interlude called ye Virgin Queene". No such a piece was among the papers, though doubtless Ireland intended to fabricate it, had the bubble not burst so soon. As it is, the fragments so called, were probably written by George Steevens, or by Waldron himself, to show how easy it was to write like Shakspeare (!) if only as Thomas Hood said, "one has the mind."



Extract from the
Lives of the Sheriffs
by Percy Fitzgerald

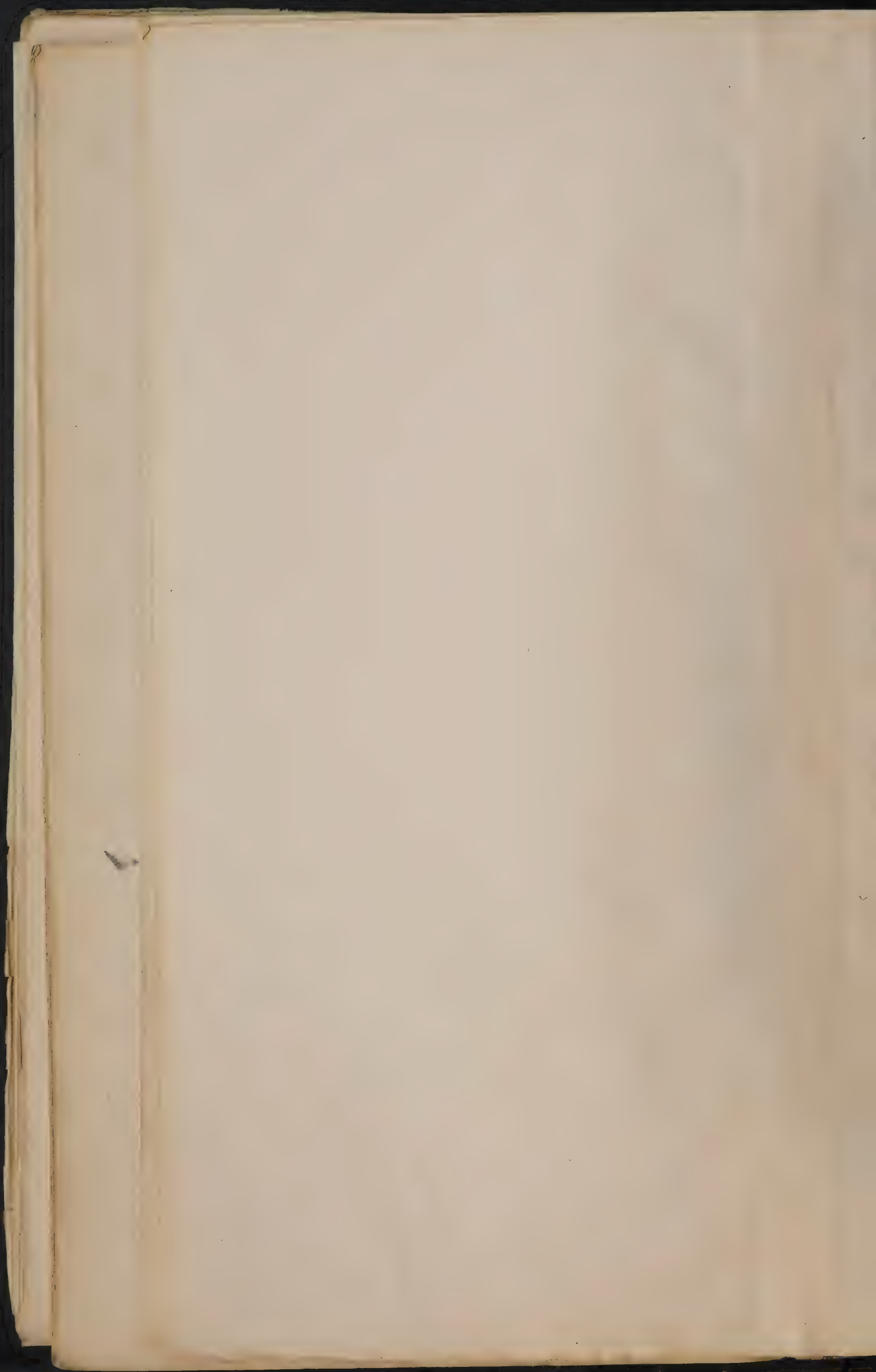
EXTRACTS FROM "THE LIVES OF THE SHERIDANS by
PERCY FITZGERALD. 1886.

p.14 Among other ventures not so successful, Sheridan had allowed himself to be caught by the arts of the designing Shaksperian forger, Ireland. He was drawn into his schemes by the hope of making a serious coup, though Ireland himself tells us that the manager did not care to enter very earnestly into the question of the genuineness of the article offered.

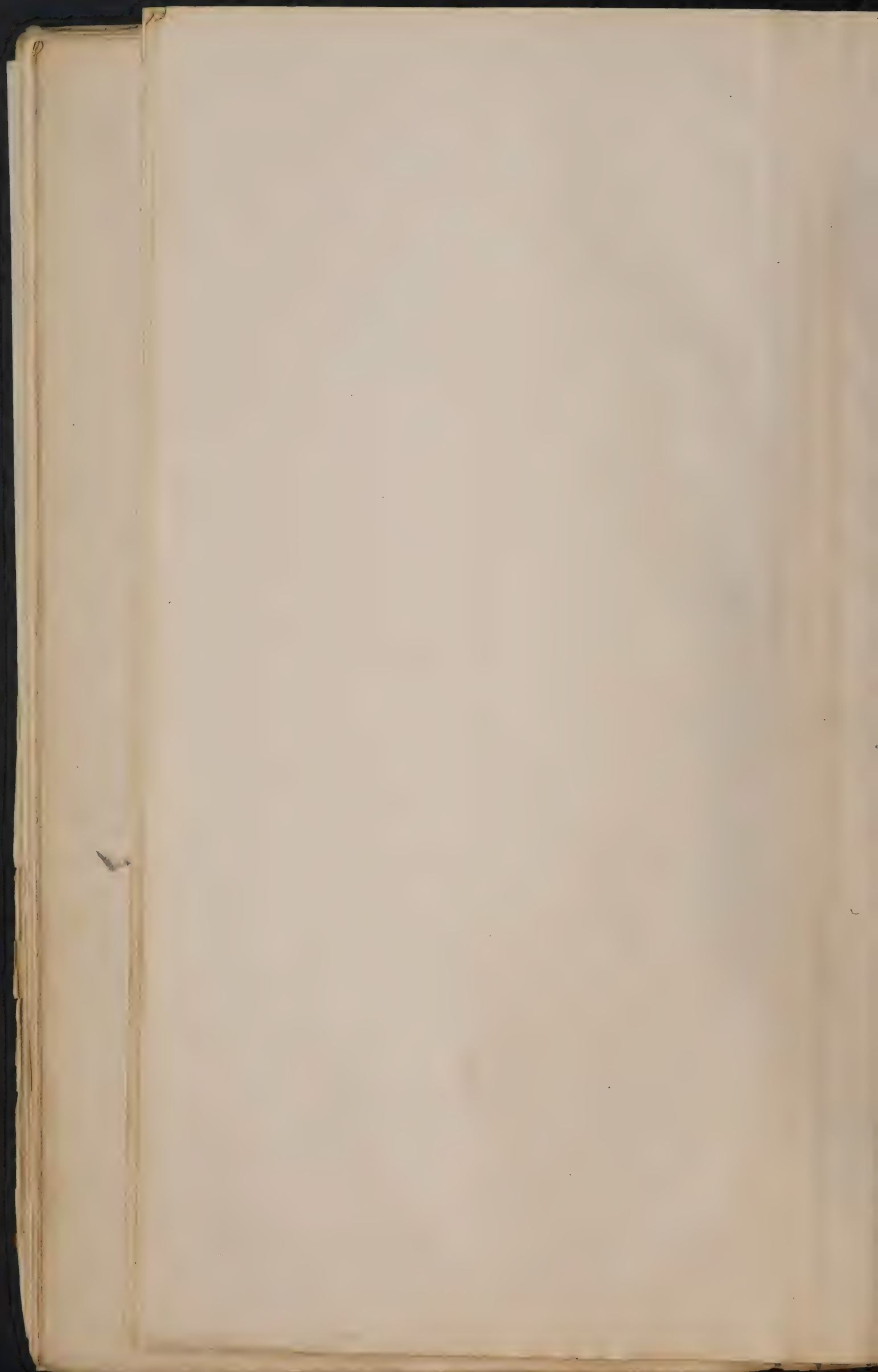
Even after accepting the piece, "Vortigern", he ~~se~~ seemed to throw as many obstacles as possible in the way of producing it. The managers procrastinating arts, his failure to "keep appointments" with the fretful author, or rather owner, his forgetfulness etc., are all illustrated in the MS. papers which have been preserved relating to its production.

The tremendous fiasco of that nights performance, Kembles studious indifference, & attempt to wreck the piece, slowly repeating, "And when this solemn mockery is over," are well known.

Note:- These are to be found in the British Museum, & are characteristic. We find "R.B.S," (in June 1795) "putting off the pleasure of hearing "Vortigern" read," & on the 7th. Ireland complaining bitterly of disappointments "in meeting Mr.S. to settle." When the play was put in rehearsal without the new scenery that had been promised, a written order was at last obtained from Sheridan directing the scene-painter, Greenwood to proceed at once with the work. This it seems was "totally disregarded," the painter saying that "consistently with the orders from the house he could not pay it any attention." This shews the general want of discipline. "I am confident," wrote Sheridan, "I shall not fail to-morrow" - an inversion that



is truly characteristic. At last the agreement was settled, by which the author was to receive half the profits during the first forty nights, & a sum down. When the money came to be paid, which was to be on signing, there was the usual difficulty in getting Sheridan to attend. "We are so circumstanced here that it must be at twelve to-morrow that we must meet, & the money will be ready. I assure you I have returned to town on this business, so don't accuse me of unpunctuality." On the point of submitting the piece to Kemble, the whole had nearly made shipwreck, as the author-owner made every objection & pretext against so doing. Then came complaints as to the form of advertisement. "You carefully avoid mentioning the name of Shakspeare in your advertisement. This is an injury to my property." Another grievance was: "I now hear that at the rehearsal several passages were sneered at." He next asked for the liberty of introducing a few friends at rehearsal "who may with candour serve the cause." But he was told plainly that "if any strangers accompany him, performers will certainly decline repeating their parts." He then received this notice from the great tragedienne herself: "Mrs. Siddons' compliments to Mr. Ireland; she finds that 'Vortigern' is intended to be performed next Saturday, & begs to assure him that she is very sorry the weak state of her health, after almost six weeks of indisposition, renders her incapable of even going to the necessary rehearsals of the play, much less to act. Had she been fortunately well, she would have done all in her power to justify Mr. Ireland's polite sentiments on the subject, when she had the honour of seeing him on Saturday." On the eve of the performance Ireland had prepared an advertisement, when a peremptory note came from the other great pillar of the house: "Mr. Kemble has sent back



his opinion as follows: "If it is done it will effect-
ually damn the play. Tell Mr. Ireland my opinion, & let
him act as he pleases." All this shews that long before
its performance the piece was foredoomed to failure,
& that behind the curtain, it was held to be a mere
piece of charlatany.

Among the Drury Lane MSS. is preserved the following
balance-sheet of the first night's receipts:

1796. Saturday, 2nd. April.

"Vortigern" And "Grandmother."

First account:

Paid:

	£	s	d		£	s	d
Box . . 1,134	340	- 10	- 0	165	24	- 15	- 0
Pit . . 784	130	- 18	- 0	4	0	- 8	- 0
First gallery 457	45	- 14	- 0	17	0	- 17	- 0
Top gallery 224	11	- 4	- 0	19	0	- 9	- 6
	<hr/>				<hr/>		
	£528	- 6	- 0		26	- 9	- 6
				Total	554	- 15	- 6
				After money,	0	- 11	- 0
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					555	- 6	- 6
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					350	- 0	- 0
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					Rd. Peake.		

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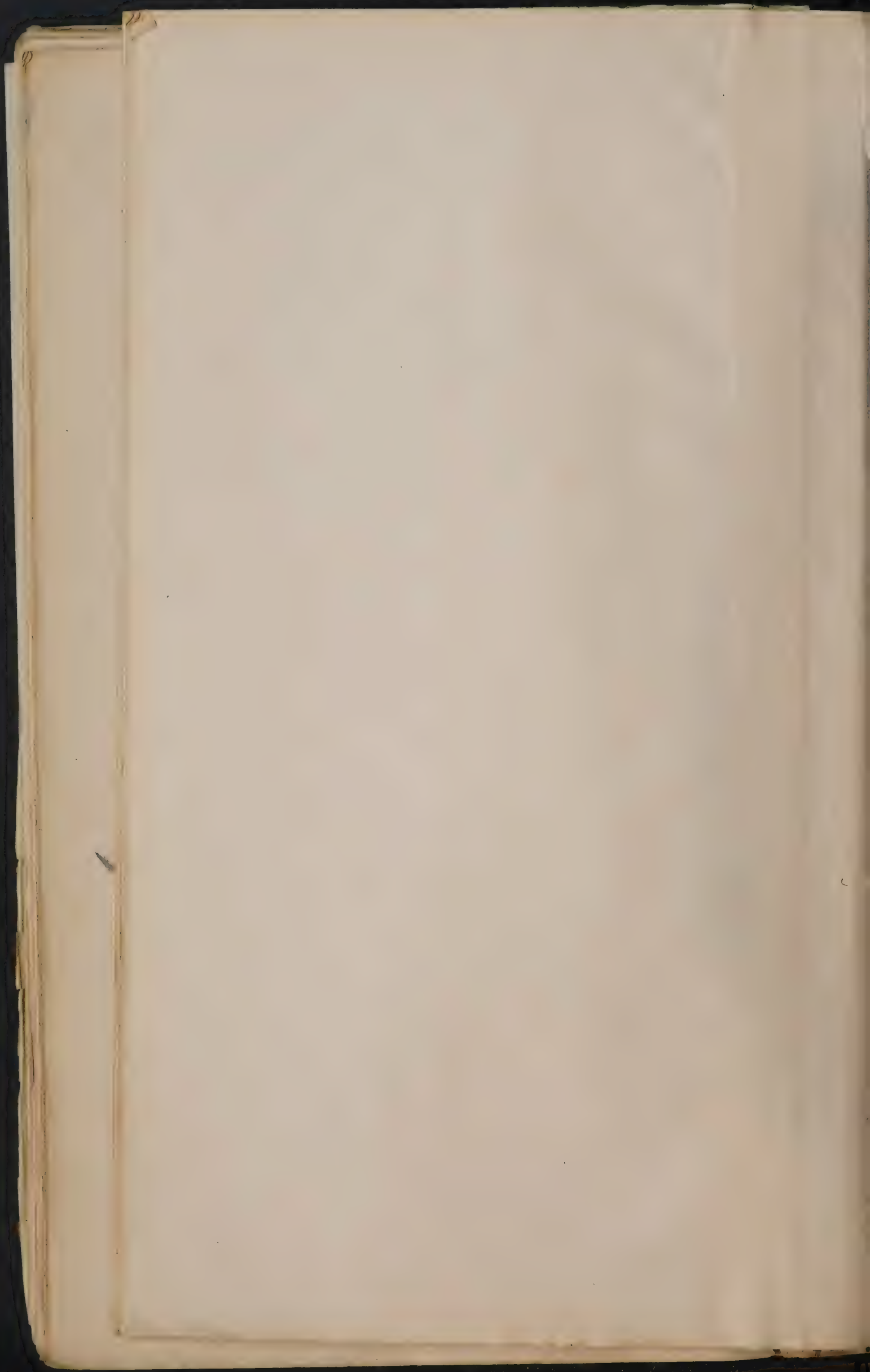
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p.28.vol.2. RICHARD PEAKE, TREASURER OF DRURY LANE
THEATRE,

This "Dick" Peake was a character in his way, a successful writer of plays, & author of the well-known "Miller & his Men", a piece no doubt borrowed from the Germans.

The late Mr. Planche' knew him, & described his happy gift of fitting his actors; & though he had no wit, he could put plenty of "fun" into his farces. "These were usually damned on the first night, & recovered themselves wonderfully afterwards. His extreme good temper & obliging nature made him a universal favourite.

When his later manager, Arnold, lost all in the conflagration of the Lyceum Theatre, he generously thrust a bond for £200 into the fire, saying, "Let this go too."

He died poor, "a singular circumstance," adds the genial Planche', a little oddly, "considering he had been so many years treasurer of a theatre;" but a natural one, considering he had been Sheridan's treasurer.

W. S. RICHARD PEARCE, TREASURER OF DRURY LANE
THEATRE,

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extremely afterwards. His extreme good temper &
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He died poor, "a singular circumstance," adds the
al Planché, "a little oddly," considering he had been
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considering he had been Sheridan's treasurer.

